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NAPOLEON

WALTER H. LISTER

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THE MAN AND HIS MISSION

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By

WALTER H. LISTER

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PART I

The Man

ONCE upon a time many peoples gathered together many firebrands and stacked them within an enclosure ; and the shape of the enclosure was as the shape of a circle. Now labour enjoins rest. So these many peoples cast themselves down upon the ground round about the enclosure. A while—a little while—they slept. Then of a sudden up rose the individual who ignited one firebrand which in its turn ignited another ; and so on and so on until at last the whole stack was licked about with flame. But who supplied the initial fire which enabled the igniter to commence the ignition no man knoweth. Only it hath been handed down to us that such was supplied and with this we must rest content. Now when

these peoples awakened from their sleep and saw what was done they were filled with astonishment. And at first, delighting in the warmth and finding merriment in the crackling of the faggots, they applauded the deed and the doer thereof. But when it became too hot for their comfort and the crackling of the faggots no longer begot amusement but terror, they were seized with a panic and cursed the doer of this deed. Then in their wrath they fell upon him and bound him and cast him into the fire. But the instant his person touched the burning mass the flames were converted into a thick smoke which descended upon these peoples and suffocated them unto death. Nor did the smoke clear until the whole stack was converted into a heap of ashes. Then a strange thing happened. From out of the centre of this heap of ashes there sprang a little green leaf which neither grew nor withered but ever remained the same. And so it may be seen unto this day. The many dead peoples disposed around a heap of ashes from the centre of which upriseth

a little green leaf which groweth not neither doth it wither but ever remaineth the same.

Men at a distance are as naught. Their foibles and their fancies retreat before the onset of time, until at last they become lost to the gaze. And what remains to the would-be sightseer is merely shade many times removed from the material. Their evil deeds are the first to pale and pass into nothingness : their good works the last to take their leave of shape. That they lived is the substance of all knowledge : that they did, the contentment of all truth. When they are to be honoured is at all times. How they are to be judged is with charity. As it is by this doing, we may hope one day to become worthy of the like. Therefore, let the present content our greatness, since the future is not for it.

Napoleon looms large in the public eye. A halo of romance surrounds him ; a veil of mystery envelops him. Generation unto generation speaks and see ! a little man in a three-cornered hat takes unto himself substance

and a name. His extraordinary rise from the low levels of mediocrity to the heights of ingenuity, and from thence to the Imperial purple fascinates him who plies the toils of an ordinary mortal. But when we come to ask how an attorney's second son was able to play so important a role in the world's history, our curiosity receives a check. We appeal to history, but history is silent upon the subject. We examine the man and find him wonderful enough but human notwithstanding. What, then, was the motive power which enabled this engine of destruction to spread dismay throughout the length and breadth of the civilized world? We appeal to reason, and reason refers us to a consideration of the mind. And, indeed, there is reason to suppose that to understand the man we must discuss the workings of his mind, if so we would unravel a few of the many tangles into which his lively thread is being forever thrown.

Shelley did a wise thing when he went to the mind for information. For the mind is always

able to explain itself. Biographies exhibit the outer man to the public gaze, but the inner man is not always so apparent. And, indeed, there is reason to suppose the great writer is he who displays with an efficient ease the lesser workings of the human machine alike with the greater thereof. No brain is without its cortex, neither is any man without his superficialities. And to be able to distinguish between the glitter and the gold, one must combine the obstinacy of the mule and the ways of the sleuth-hound. For man is a profounder study than all others. You can reduce him to a cell, but to a principle never.

Napoleon, as a psychological study, is unique. He is so various. Several remarkable men lived about the same time, but none can compare with him for interest. That one and the same mind should be capable of a capacious faculty for intaking, a spontaneity of contrivance, and a subtlety in expression truly Italian, is of itself a matter for surprise. It is just as if you took the pith of the German mind,

added to it the essence of the French, threw in a little of the Italian and labelled it Napoleon.

Napoleon was a spoilt child of fortune. Fortune smiled upon him from the beginning, and he continued to bask in the sunshine of her favour to a wonderful extent. Unlike most of the great men of the earth, the poverties of a hardly-won victory were unknown to him. For genius more often sends a man supperless to bed than daintily filled and scarce counts a driven bargain cheap; and, indeed, the spoil of the world's adornment has been bought with tears of blood. Neither is genius altogether an enviable possession. Bethink you of the divers heartaches attendant upon the success that never comes. Bethink you of the intellectual precocity that compels genius to run before the years—and, oh, the plethora of affronts put upon its sensibilities in the van of time. Bethink you of the frolic of circumstance so oft the reason of a noble purpose gone awry. All these, and divers of no less import, contrive to make this commodity a dear purchase.

Napoleon, however, was ignorant of such. His heart was never twisted with pain in the morning of life. Rather was he impelled many and many a league upon the highway of success by the youthful strength within him, which no failure could conceive. His aids—an innumerable company of happy sprites and every one an attendant slave; his experience—a series of successes which culminated in a prodigy of performance marvellous to relate.

Napoleon's vanity is proverbial. Imagine him prowling round the camp of a night to hear what the soldiers said about him. Suppose him in his cabinet discussing a state matter with Talleyrand. Soon he leaves the question under consideration, and permits his genius one of those flights of fancy so characteristic of it. Talleyrand endeavours in vain to keep him down to the low levels of the prosaic. Napoleon soars higher and higher, and eventually reaches surprising heights before he descends to earth again. Of course, he never meant what he said; he only wanted to astonish Talley-

rand. Talleyrand often laughed at Napoleon, but Napoleon as often made a fool of him. Consider him next giving directions to his secretary. Owing to his capacious faculty for intaking he was able to store his mind with a fund of useful information, which he would draw upon with a generous hand. And, whether it was the cost of a button or the price of a fleet, he knew what he was talking about. And, indeed, his wits were ever at home in the discussion of a question. Now he would lessen the weight of a plume, and now arrange for the maintenance of an army. Afterwards he would glance round to see the effect of his words upon the bystanders. Did they look their astonishment, he would like them : did they gape, he would love them and pinch their ears. His passion for pose, his audacious strut, his studied frown, and the like may be cited as further evidence of his inordinate vanity.

Napoleon may justly be considered a wise ruler. He was willing to learn from others. He found France in chaos, and restored her to

order. He reconstructed her legal machinery and added to her attractions. He respected the national prejudices without sharing them. He was strict with his officers and a tyrant to himself; an excellent illustration of the truth that natural rulers are seldom born to crowns.

Napoleon is always Napoleon. Remark him exploit a coarse gibe and a running commentary between two hasty pinches of snuff. See him saunter through a ball-room, now finding fault with the rotundity of a lady's shoulder, and now bantering a general upon his losses at cards. Hear him call loudly for his dinner after keeping it waiting to the detriment of some seventeen fowls or so. Watch him toss volume after volume out of the carriage-window as he is being whirled from one battlefield to another. Note how quickly he changes; now in busy contemplation of many things, and now alert to the slightest stimulus.

Waterloo has done more than crown with undying laurels the magnificent soldiery of France and Britain. For there is reason to

suppose it proclaims the Divine or the inevitable in the ordering of events. There, on the one hand, was Napoleon, the foremost champion in modern times of the genius of aggression; there, on the other, was Wellington, the foremost champion in modern times of the genius of resistance. And surely it would seem as if the years were obedient to the direction of a greater than man in bringing this genius face to face. At last the haughty genius of aggression was confronted with the haughty genius of resistance. And the day proved the haughtier.

And Waterloo was inevitable. Had Napoleon won the day, doubtless the star of his fortunes would once again have shot up into the heavens to flood the world with a blaze of glory. But as doubtless his intolerant ambition would once again have shaken to their foundations the thrones of Europe. And as surely the then powers would once again have sunk all petty differences and pettier jealousies in face of the common danger. Creeping Russia and slow-moving England, far-seeing

Prussia and haughty Austria, and others, would once again have joined forces to hurl the tyrant from his throne. And upon that day the sons of France would have been too scattered throughout their vast possessions to be capable of concerted action. Thus the genius of aggression would have been discounted, by reason of its very fulness of expression. Whilst, on the other hand, that of resistance would have been rendered many times more haughty because of the additional provocation. For the French under Napoleon did not exercise the art of carrying gentle peace in the one hand and a drawn sword in the other. With them might was right, and the sword the determining factor in every discussion. So they inflamed instead of pacifying the temper of the conquered. Had it been otherwise, Napoleon had fared better. For then he might have attached to his person and interests States and Principalities which would have proved a help and not a hindrance in the hour of danger. But however that may be, it is evident the genius of aggres-

sion must once again have been confronted with that of resistance. And with this difference. Whereas the former would have been weakened, the latter would have been strengthened at the hands of time. So the victory must assuredly have fallen to the latter. And upon that day the fall of Napoleon would have been so tremendous as utterly to ruin the country of his adoption. And so the name of France would have passed from among the peoples of this earth.

Whether or no did Napoleon make France great? Surely not. Certainly he pandered to her pride and advanced her arms in a wonderful manner. But for her as for any other nation he created an impossible situation. Surely the bubble was over-quickly charged, and surely the bubble burst. Rather, he traded upon the weaknesses of her nature. He knew he catered for a nation in whom love of the astonishing was a remarkable feature. He knew the only way to control an aggressive military was to keep it employed. He knew

the surest way to gain his own ends was to practise upon the vain-glory of his fellows. So he dazzled them with fancied successes the while he blinded their eyes to his real intent—the masterdom of affairs. Supreme control over mind and matter alone could satisfy the yearnings of his despotic nature. And this to affect neither a country nor a continent, but the greater part of the civilized world. And think we that any nation, howsoever well endowed the national mind, could realize so great an attainment during the life-time of an individual? Surely it is an impossibility. Only the centuries can sanction so vast an undertaking. And even they would require a national mind otherwise constituted than any extant for the fulfilment of their purpose. For there is reason to suppose each and every of the national minds to be deficient in some particular; the which deficiency renders it impossible for any one nation to become the director of the world's affairs.

Concede to me some reason in the foregoing

remarks, and I will concede to you that in the wake of the eighteenth century there stalked a very giant among men, a very monarch among the aristocrats of the mind. Now fate or chance or destiny, or what you will, directed the steps of this giant towards the shores of a certain country. And the name of the giant was Napoleon, and the name of the country France. And when he was come unto this country he was come unto his own. For never were events more cunningly ordered than when the conceits of Napoleon became the distresses of France. Review the situation. Here was an individual shortly to become by reason of his arts the darling of the military and the idol of the populace: and here was a national temper agreeable to the exercise of the same. Here was an individual ambition shortly to covet the impossible: and here was a national ambition easy of the same. Here was an individual genius shortly to be permitted those flights of fancy which serve only to dissipate its energy: and here was a national genius accus-

tomed to the same. How now, my masters, and it please you to discover herein a marvel in weddings you are reasonable indeed. Mind, if you persist in the contrary, I will get Carlyle to speak to you. And so with reluctance. For I do believe if you were drowning in a butt of claret this man would rate you soundly concerning the folly of drink ere he attempted your rescue. And when he found he was going and you were gone, well, he would sit upon your carcase and indulge the passers-by to a homily upon the nothingness of life. And small good that would do you. But we forget ourselves. And to the point. Napoleon was filled with an intense desire to appear well in the sight of man. And being a man of some wisdom, he knew that in order to realize this desire he must influence others to the same way of thinking as himself. So he set about to tease the French mind into a similar train of thought to his own. And in this he experienced little difficulty. And being a man of much wisdom he knew that in order to make others think for Napoleon,

Napoleon must make it appear as if they thought for themselves. So publicly he set about to make France the and not a determining factor in the conduct of this world's affairs. So privately he set about to secure for himself what supreme control over mind and matter alone could satisfy the yearnings of his despotic nature. And in this he experienced frequent and invincible difficulty. And being a man of considerable wisdom, he knew that in the influencing of others there is more power in that which is withheld than in that which is evidenced. So he set about to plan and to scheme, to hint and to nod, and generally to make himself a mysterious being. So to cause men to quail beneath the glance of that cold eye for fear of what heat might lie beyond it. And in this he experienced no difficulty whatsoever. Thus by an attention to these several and complete particulars he created for himself a wonderful situation.

Really he was a remarkable man, this Napoleon. And to discuss him is indeed a

variety entertainment. There is so much to interest, so little to disregard. And France was the theatre of his activities. Alas for France! She was to see her homes alternately filled with the sound of merry-making and the noise of lamentation. She was to see her flag alternately flying from the citadels of Europe and trailing in the mire of a national scramble. She was to see her Paris alternately the centre of the world's attraction and the spoil of a conquering host. And all this in the service of an impossible attainment. A moment, please. It is to be considered France never fully realized the menace of the situation in those days of mad excitement. And well for her she did not. For life to Napoleon was not an act of God but a fact. And so long as this fact was subservient to his will he was content. And think we that the man who scrupled not to tamper with the office of His Holiness the Pope would be careful of the temporalities of mankind? Scarcely, methinks. What cared he whether twenty or twenty thousand of his

men lay stretched in their last sleep? To him it meant only the fewer to play with. Mistake me not. Next to himself I believe he loved the army. Some say Josephine, but I doubt it. Yet this love was strictly limited in extent. Was there a human obstacle to be placed in the path of the enemy, it was done. Napoleon might sigh, nay, he might weep at the sacrifice entailed. But it was done. Ambition willed it. And what ambition willed sentiment might not prevent. Yes, it was done. And the bloodied snows of Russia shall testify unto all time to the manner of the doing. And what is the fate of any nation, howsoever well endowed the national mind, under such direction? Extermination, surely; neither more nor less. And in the case of France indications were not wanting to suspicion this event. Already she had lived to see stripling generations hurried to the front. Already she had lived to call upon the elder of her sons without an answering yea. And from this fate which was slowly yet surely

approaching she was recovered with as little expense to her pride as was possible under the circumstances. For Europe was generosity itself in her treatment of the fallen people.

The French are proud of their Napoleon. And rightly so. For his visit to earth is a series of remembrances sufficiently wonderful to excuse the affection. But mistake him not. He was wont to pose as a creature of destiny. Nor is this surprising. For well might he who had discarded the toggery of a subaltern to don the trappings of an emperor deem himself of superior clay to his fellows. And yet we do well to remember this. Though the ordering of chance or fate or destiny, or what you will, may be thought overbig with foreknowledge of events to be other than instinctive of an ordering impossible to man, yet it is to be held to go so far and no farther. Surely the bringing together is more than man and surely the working out is very man. And what is it all except the Divine or the inevitable in the union of forces. And here we have in the wedding

of the conceits of Napoleon with those of the Frenchman a union of forces instinctive of an ordering impossible to man. Man may confess the years, but the centuries never. So the bringing together was more than man, but the working out was very man. A series of successes and the soldier-adventurer became the Emperor of the French. And the receipts from these successes were set against the expenses of a private ambition; to be more explicit—were expended in the founding of a dynasty. Yet the founder thereof demanded of the years a vaster dominion than the years could concede. And so the whole fabric of empire, because erected upon a hasty foundation, tottered and fell. And loud was the falling thereof, but louder the noise of lamentation roundabout.

Napoleon was exceedingly jealous of his own reputation. He was scarcely the man to do good by stealth. He would do anything for France provided the whole world knew Napoleon had done it. Who gained this victory?

—Napoleon. Who framed this measure?—Napoleon. Who planned this surprise?—Napoleon. That was Napoleon. He was on the best of terms with himself in particular and everybody in general when his was the hand that plucked the golden fruit. Rivalry of any kind irritated him beyond measure. And so it is not surprising he never forgave success in another.

Numerous are the exponents to incline the following belief. That it is in the power of the individual so to play a game of chess. A game in which each piece represents an historical personage and each move an historical event. And for the pieces to be manipulated in such a manner as to warrant the belief that each is a free agent and each translation a natural sequence. But for it to be in reality the individual who inspires the movements of the game and directs the action of the pieces, lightly checking those about to err. Now this is a clerkly subtlety curious to relate and Napoleon was a subtle man. Instance his behaviour at

Tilsit. Methinks his smooth numbers put to shame even the courtly suavity of the Emperor of all the Russias. Ta, ta, Napoleon, the feel of the velvet glove is comforting to the touch but occasionally one can see the iron showing beneath. Yes, Napoleon was a subtle man. He was constantly practising upon the credulity and understanding of his fellows. His public utterances were not always an index to his mind upon a given subject but rather a set delivery intended for the edification of posterity. But of course he was a politician and at all times chary of the truth.

Napoleon was eminently a leader of men. And indeed among the powers and possibilities over which he exercised control was the ability to bring out the best in another. He chose his generals with a precision wonderful to relate. He knew exactly what they could do and precisely where to place them. Ney was a stubborn fighter; keep him in the rear. Augereau was a dashing soldier; send him to the front. Moreover Napoleon had a working knowledge

of human nature. He always sent his men into battle in a good humour with themselves. Whatever his fears he never showed them. He was too wise a general not to know that gaiety and not sadness should obtain upon the eve of a great undertaking. Hence his stirring proclamations which roused the enthusiasm of the troops to the highest pitch while his magnetic personality and confident bearing acted like a dose of champagne upon the officers in attendance upon him. "Soldiers of the Empire, the enemy lies before you. Heroes of Jena and Austerlitz, veterans of Italy, France and your Emperor confidently expect that this day you will enhance the splendour of your arms by a victory still more brilliant than any before." Decidedly he was an army in himself, this little man on the big white horse. See him ride along the lines to the acclamations of a warrior host, with a smile for every one and a menace for none. His mere presence upon the field of battle was enough to revive the drooping spirits of the serried array, perhaps worn out

with forced marches and continuous fighting. And what is more to the point, his soldiers had unbounded confidence in him. They knew that smiling exterior masked an acute sagacity and an iron will that was bound to win. Besides, he always said it was his custom to sleep on the field of battle. And so their fiery ardour impelled them upon the enemy with relentless fury and more often than not they carried all before them.

Genius, or the faculty of creation, or what you will, may be thought to be with an intellectual precocity that compels it to run before the years. And many and divers are the novelties it encounters in the van of time. Each a power in itself to open up the public understanding to a fuller knowledge of many things and each the harbinger of another. Napoleon was a military genius. Doubtless his innovations in the art of war are of considerable moment, but this is for a military expert to decide. However that may be, his spontaneity of contrivance stood him in good

stead. For owing to the exertions of the same he was alert to the slightest stimulus and ready to cope with any emergency—lightning brained beyond a doubt.

We have seen how soon a man can die. And yet a multiplicity of operations contribute to the act. And so it is with what collection of individuals is commonly termed a nation. Too often a younger time finds them bad and an older leaves them worse. And betwixt the coming and the going of the years is an interval of time pregnant with disaster to mankind. Napoleon knew this. He was too great a statesman to underrate the value of religion as a restraining influence upon the masses. Moreover he knew that when there is no ideal the people perish. And so he restored the Church of France. He was singularly free from prejudice himself in these matters, but respected that in others.

Napoleon was a shrewd man. He had an exact knowledge of the utility of the individual as a public advantage. And in all his under-

takings he exploits this knowledge, but especially in his dealings with the common soldiers. He was sprung from the people and he feared the people. He knew, none better, that the masses and not the classes interpret the conditions of prosperity to nations in particular and mankind in general. Moreover he was versed in the psychology of crowds and well aware that the people who welcomed him so enthusiastically on his return from the seat of war would hoot as lustily were he on his way to the scaffold. And so he was careful in all things and at all times to keep the peace at home, well knowing a house divided against itself cannot stand. Similarly he was anxious his soldiers should think their general took a personal interest in them. And at times he would acquaint himself with the private history of several of the rank and file. And being so far instructed he would decorate a deserving subaltern, the while observing to the gratification of those around: "Your father was a gallant soldier; he fought under me at Aus-

terlitz. Your uncle was another; he fell at Jena, I believe."

Generally speaking, Napoleon was a vague thinker. His habit of thought was characterized by a series of interruptions; a passing from one subject to another with a minimum amount of inquiry into each. He had an eye for everything and a scrutiny for nothing. His respect for intellect is a pleasing trait in his character. He was a considerable reader and had a wide acquaintance with the literature of his day. He was fond of the drama and pretended to a critical faculty in poetry and the arts.

Napoleon was a fatalist. It seems to me his creed was simply this—What is to be, will be, and fate will have it so. Whatever his religious beliefs, if any, they never influenced his conduct. His moral code was elasticity itself, and yet there were times when he was puzzled as to the why and the wherefore of things. Doubtless he was tempted to raise his head and laugh derision at the Heavens from his

pinnacle of human greatness. But the sun by his majesty, the moon by her serenity, and the stars by their complexity, flung back the puny defiance to earth again a thousand-fold diminished. And Napoleon bowed his head and wondered exceedingly. Despite his big-bellied blustering he appreciated his insignificance in the plan of creation. He knew that Science is wise, but fact is wiser still; that matter teems with possibilities, but it is not life-giving; that time was when even Napoleon was not. And so he would fume and fret and gibe and chaff and chatter, this man of the mighty past—not once but many times confounded.

Whether or no is Napoleon deserving the whole-hearted love of a people? Truly a mixed question and one to be carefully discussed. To cheat the truth, yes; to honour the truth, no. The former in very truth; the latter in greater truth. And why the latter in greater truth? Because Napoleon's religion was himself, Hence it is to be considered, and may be

held with reason, that the only Napoleon is deserving considerable honour among men, but not the whole-hearted love of a people. And yet give praise where praise is due; give Napoleon praise in this. He had a great work to do and he did it well. For there is reason to suppose it was his to collect the unkind energies of the Revolution into one tremendous force the better to dissipate them in a multiplicity of expenses. And if he did this both Frenchmen in particular and mankind in general may well pay a tribute to the memory of the fallen brave.

PART II

His Mission

A TRUE idea of perspective may be thought as helpful to the historian as to the theologian. And indeed a careful consideration of the past confirms us in the Divine or the inevitable in the ordering of events. And whether it be in political or religious history the teaching is the same—a union of forces over-big with foreknowledge of events to be other than instinctive of an ordering impossible to man. Man may confess the years, but the centuries never. Marvel not then that both political and religious crises should be met with a precision impossible to relate. For God is the Master of the Universe and Himself may be thought to be identified with the conduct of this world's affairs ; and thus through the exertions of what inevitability in the ordering of

events is herein and otherwise termed the genius of circumstance. And indeed it is to be considered, and may be held with reason, that a true idea of perspective is as helpful to the historian as to the theologian. And just as between the lines of every page in history may be read the history of the national mind, so too an inquiry into the past instructs us in the conditions of this mortal life and the responsibility attaching thereto. And if such and so great be powers and possibilities over which perspective exercises control it is surely deserving of attention.

The only Napoleon may justly be considered the central figure in modern history. His magnificent activities and prodigies of performance entitle him to be esteemed one of the great men of the earth. But to explain him we must explain the French Revolution. We consult the history of France about the time of his coming, and what do we find? Surely the national mind in a state of unrest and the national temper inflamed. We seek an explan-

ation of this state of affairs, and what is the result? Surface reasons assert themselves, only to be dismissed as inadequate to the occasion. Naturally we conclude the French Revolution has a world-wide significance. Consequently we look for parallels. We ransack the past and find a similar state of affairs obtained in England a few years previously. We think upon the present and encounter a like exhibition in Russia. We take these three episodes in the world's history and compare them. Are they analagous? Surely they are. Naturally we conclude they have a common origin. A slight scrutiny enables us to eliminate the religious factor in all; there only remains the political element. We reduce them to their simplest form, and what have we? A king and a people at variance with one another. We prosecute an inquiry into the conditions of rule and an explanation offers itself.

Let us to the days that are gone. Time was when the king's word was the people's law. And it was well so. For the public

understanding was not of sufficiency at the then time itself to undertake the conduct of affairs. Hence the institution of kings or headmen at the instance of the Divine. The same to obtain until what time the public understanding should be of sufficiency itself to undertake the conduct of affairs.

Now among the powers and possibilities over which the king or headman exercised control was the ability to confer authority upon another. And indeed it was necessary he should attach certain to his person and interests ; and thereby be maintained in authority and strengthened in opinion. For though he was the director of the nation's affairs and his sovereignty absolute yet he was unable of himself to content the conditions of rule save by a distribution of power. Neither could he satisfy himself of what conveniences appertained to the public advantage except by a reference to the opinion of others. Hence the institution of nobles or elders at the instance of the king or headman under favour of

the Divine. The same to ease him of the burden of rule and confirm him in the wants of the people.

Now man is no sensible creation destined to play an allotted part, but a creative and progressive creation destined to fulfil the manner of his own conceptions. And the more he creates the further he progresses. And the further he progresses the abler he is to think for himself. And the abler he is to think for himself the less he respects the rule of an individual and the more he values that of a community. Hence the institution of community in rule at the instance of the public understanding under favour of the Divine. The same to justify the transference of authority from the king or headman through the nobles or elders to the people at large.

Now every question of rule may be thought to present upon examination two separate and distinct trains of argument ; the one in favour of, and the other contrary to, the proposition advanced. Hence the division of a ruling

community into two parties ; the one to discuss the arguments in favour of, and the other those contrary to, the propositions advanced. And in correspondence with the numerical value of the respective parties may be thought the persuasion of the people at large. And in relation to the persuasion of the people at large may be thought the measure of the public understanding. And in accordance with the measure of the public understanding may be thought the inevitable in the ordering of events. And indeed there is reason to suppose it was ever a part of the wise desire that in due season the public understanding should interpret the conditions of rule to nations in particular and mankind in general. And since the intellect of the world is beginning to favour community in rule : and since community in rule discusses the for and against of a question : and since the exercise of such discussion is in correspondence with the persuasion of the people at large : and since the persuasion of the people at large is in relation to the measure of the

public understanding : and since the measure of the public understanding is in accordance with the inevitable in the ordering of events : and since inevitability in the ordering of events proclaims the Divine in the conduct of this world's affairs, it may well be genius of rule is nearing maturity and will yet attune our voices to prouder notes of triumph in the march of civilization.

Perhaps a consideration of these several and complete particulars may justify the following belief ; that the Revolutions of late and present times are outward and visible signs of what growing contempt for the individual will result in the transference of authority from the king or headman to the people at large. But such and so great a change cannot be effected without the generation of much that is unkind to man. And indeed many and various are the disagreeables which signalize this important era in the life-history of rule. All capable of producing others of a similar intensity and all unkind alike to nations in particular and man-

kind in general. Naturally the world is anxious to rid itself of such an evil community. But how to do so is a difficult question, since nations are impatient of control. Now God is wonderfully kind and Himself may be thought to contrive the dissipation of the same; and thus through the exertions of what inevitability in the ordering of events is herein and otherwise termed the genius of circumstance.

Consider for a moment the history of England. Once upon a time the national mind was in a state of unrest and the national temper inflamed. The individual boldly proclaimed the absolutism of kings and the community as boldly exclaimed against the same. Bolder grew the individual but bolder still the community. Time and the few sought to mediate between them, but in vain. For the measure of the public understanding loudly declared itself an increasing quantity and not a fixed amount. "Ha! What insolence is this," exclaims the king. "Go to, thou malapert nuisance," retorts the community. Inevitable

forces were at work to sap the foundations of the kingly pile and level it with the ground. All England shared the internecine strife and brother chased brother from many a bloody field. And so they fought and wrestled, the strong assailing the weak and the weak resisting strongly. Now mark the Divine or the inevitable in the ordering of events. Presently and the community boasts a leader with all the prestige a leader confers. Assuredly a man of genius and therefore with an intellectual precocity that compelled him to run before the years. Doubtless a religious fanatic; a psalm upon his lips and murder in his heart. But a strong man and a generous one whose aims were his country's and his God's. He came, he saw, and he conquered. And ere the kingly pile came tumbling about his ears he had collected the whole energies of the Revolution into one tremendous force, the better to apply what was kind to the public advantage and dissipate what was unkind in a multiplicity of expenses. Afterwards the second Charles

sat easily upon his father's seat, but for England the reign of the individual was over when the head of the proudest prince in Christendom rolled dripping from the block. A cruel deed and a bloody one and only to be excused in so far as man is apt to exceed his instructions. Nevertheless it was a happy day for England when the acute sagacity of a Cromwell forced the community to respect the interests of the common weal.

Consider for a moment the history of France. Once upon a time the national mind was in a state of unrest and the national temper inflamed. An old order of things was about to pass away and a new to take its place, for see! the fabric of Empire crumbles into dust beneath the touch of the rude forefinger of learning. A fickle king and a haughty aristocracy aggravated the evils attendant upon the transition from comparative absolutism to community in rule. Order was not and kill the inspiration of the hour. Somebody spoke and soon a maddened crowd waved aloft the flag of liberty, crimsoned

with the royal blood of France. Bright staring eyes and hollow cheeks, white-aproned servitors and red-capped artisans, how they rough-and-tumble one another, to be sure. "What! Shall the king go and none with him?" hotly asked a grocer-body. "Down with the aristocrats!" shrieked the multitude in response, determined no shadow of authority should darken their Temple of Liberty. And so they twisted and turned and twirled about upon the stage of European politics, sinning and sinned against, setting up and putting down at their list, now investing this one with the right of action and now that, seeking peace and finding none. Now mark the Divine or the inevitable in the ordering of events. Presently and a person of less than ordinary dimensions returned from a far journey to the acclamations of a warrior people. Backed by the God of War which had impelled him many and many a league upon the highway of success—backed by the adoration of a people who saw in him only the mighty conqueror come to save them

from themselves—backed by the fulfilment of much that was and big with promise of much that was to be—who could resist him? Not the people of France. Not a people whose annals were drenched with blood, whose practices stank of anarchy. Eagerly they welcomed him; wholly they trusted him. Little they recked of the change of masters, little they suspicioned the day when their necks would be bruised beneath the iron heel of a military despotism. They saw only the favourite of fortune whose magnificent activities had accustomed them to prodigies of performance. Now he spoke peaceful words unto them and now he identified himself with the several necessities of the hour. And the people looked upon him and were inly satisfied he was all the people's friend should be. Nor were they mistaken. For soon he had collected the whole energies of the Revolution into one tremendous force, the better to apply what was kind to the public advantage and dissipate what was unkind in a multiplicity of expenses.

And indeed it was a happy day for every one concerned when the conceits of Napoleon became those of the Frenchmen. For to this union of forces may be ascribed the dissipation of much that was unkind to man.

Hence it is to be considered and may be held with reason that Napoleon's mission was rather negative than positive. Granted, he was an instrument in the hands of a greater. Granted, his visit to earth pays tribute to what inevitability in the ordering of events is herein and otherwise termed the genius of circumstance. Granted, his higher activities culminated in a prodigy of performance wonderful to relate. But what then? Surely this; he played the part assigned to him and played it well. And rarely has an actor on life's stage been invested with a more magnificent role than was Napoleon Buonaparte. For there is reason to suppose it was chiefly his to collect the unkind energies of the Revolution into one tremendous force the better to dissipate them in a multiplicity of expenses.

His Imperial Majesty, Napoleon, of first and considerable memory, has left a mark upon the history of the world which even the wear and tear of the centuries will find it impossible to erase. And whether we discuss him as a conqueror or a legislator, as an administrator or a statesman, he is equally prodigal of surprise. Greater in mind there may have been, but greater in energy there never was. That he was eminently the man for France time and the event has abundantly proved. He had all the glitter calculated to win upon the sympathies of a nation so impressionable as the French. But behind the glitter was gold and gold of the rarest quality. His magnificent activities, his prodigies of performance, his military genius, his capacious faculty for intaking, his spontaneity of contrivance, his wisdom in rule, his genius of common-sense, his bravery in action, his exact knowledge of the utility of the individual, his reverence for the minutiae, his indomitable will, his magnetic personality: all these and divers of

lesser import entitle him to be esteemed one of the great men of the earth. That he was the plaything of genius, the tool of ambition, and eventually the sport of his own folly, is not surprising when we consider his psychological display. That he is to be judged by his immediate behaviours and not by his effects historical perspective will perhaps allow. That he was absolute in his governance and certain in his pronouncements is in keeping with his purposes here below. That he paraded the power of the sword through every press and capital then extant says much for the powers and possibilities over which his military genius exercised control. That he found the country of his adoption in chaos and restored her to order speaks well for his civil abilities. That he expiated his offences upon a lonely rock may serve to relegate to a kind oblivion his divers shortcomings. And now that he is one with the shades of the mighty past we may well pause to pay tribute to the memory of the fallen brave—we moilers in a mightier day.

Butler & Tanner, The Selwood Printing Works, Frome, and London.

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